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## THESIS

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ARAB MAGHREB UNION:  
ACHIEVEMENT AND PROSPECTS

by

Abderrahmen Messaoudi

June, 1994

Thesis Advisor: Kamil. T Said

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**ARAB MAGHREB UNION:  
ACHIEVEMENT AND PROSPECTS**

by

**Abderrahmen Messaoudi**  
Lieutenant, Tunisian Navy  
B.S., HEC Tunis University, 1980  
MS Supply Management, ECM Toulon, French, 1985

Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

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**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**  
June, 1994

Author:

  
Abderrahmen Messaoudi

Approved by:

  
Kamil T. Said, Thesis Advisor

  
Roger Byerred, Associate Thesis Advisor

  
David R. Whipple, Jr., Chairman  
Department of Systems Management

## ABSTRACT

February 17, 1989, witnessed the signing of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) Treaty. This union has been a dream of many generations of the peoples of North Africa. It is natural, since history and the shared geographical location have shaped this region into a distinct entity; necessary because only united can the Maghreb region better defend its interests, and increase bargaining power in dealing with the other trading Blocks.

The changing global world order, and the emergence of many regional Blocks, motivated the North African countries to work on achieving the integration of the region in order to face the internal and external challenges, at the same time contribute to promoting and safeguarding peace and stability around the region.

Along with the thoughts on the reality of the North African countries, this project analyses the achievement and the prospects of the Maghreb integration.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION . . . . .	1
II. GENERAL BACKGROUND . . . . .	8
A. THE LAND . . . . .	8
B. THE PEOPLE . . . . .	10
1. The Native Population . . . . .	11
2. The Arabization . . . . .	12
3. The European Invasion . . . . .	13
C. THE HISTORY . . . . .	14
1. Introduction . . . . .	14
2. The Modern History . . . . .	16
3. The Struggle for Independence . . . . .	17
a. Tunisian Independence . . . . .	17
b. The Moroccan Search for Independence . . . . .	18
c. The Algerian War for Independence . . . . .	18
III. NORTH AFRICA ON THE EVE OF THE 21ST CENTURY . . . . .	21
A. INTERNAL CONDITIONS . . . . .	21
1. Politics . . . . .	21
a. Morocco . . . . .	22
b. Algeria : Political Turmoil . . . . .	24
c. Tunisian Political Stability . . . . .	25

d.	The Western Sahara . . . . .	26
e.	Revival of Fundamentalism . . . . .	29
2.	The Economic Viability . . . . .	35
a.	The Tunisian Economy . . . . .	35
b.	The Moroccan Economy . . . . .	36
c.	The Algerian Economy . . . . .	37
B.	EXTERNAL INFLUENCES . . . . .	38
1.	The Enlargement of the European Community and its Impact on the Maghreb . . . . .	39
2.	The Arab World Or Maghreb Mashrek . . . . .	41
3.	The Arab World and the United States . . . . .	44
4.	Greater Africa . . . . .	46
IV.	THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR THE AREA . . . . .	50
A.	THE MAGHREB UNION . . . . .	50
1.	History . . . . .	50
2.	Structure of the Maghreb . . . . .	55
B.	EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS . . . . .	57
1.	The World Economy During the 1990s . . . . .	58
a.	The Globalization of the Market . . . . .	58
b.	The Constitution of Regional Economic Blocks . . . . .	59
2.	The North African Countries In this New World Order . . . . .	61
a.	Face to the European Block . . . . .	62
b.	The Maghreb and the Mediterranean Space . . . . .	62

V. PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS . . . . .	64
A. ACHIEVEMENT . . . . .	64
B. PROSPECTS . . . . .	66
1. Within the Maghreb region . . . . .	68
2. The Maghreb and the External Environment . . . . .	72
 VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND THE MAGHREB CASE: IS THERE ANY RECIPE? . . . . .	 76
 LIST OF REFERENCES . . . . .	 86
 INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST . . . . .	 88



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## I. INTRODUCTION

The region comprising the North African continent is one of the least written about in the world. This may be because Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, comprise a region known collectively as the Maghreb, the West, which has often been at the periphery of other, larger societies. Despite their link with the Maghreb, these larger societies are economically, politically, and religiously distinct from it.

Invaders usually paid little attention to this region, viewing it as a world apart from their own<sup>1</sup>, despite its history and geostrategic position. Phoenician, Roman, Arab, and European invaders, though willing to take possession of the region, did not assimilate it as part of their societies. The immediate consequence of this relationship has been a tendency among the historians to avoid considering the Maghreb as a social-political organization in and of itself<sup>2</sup>. A glance at the history of the region shows that some confusion has existed over the Maghreb's real identity: is it part of Africa, or it is a region of the Middle East? By virtue of its location, it is obviously a part of Africa, but its

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<sup>1</sup>Valenci, Lycette, On the Eve of Colonialism North Africa Before the French Colonization, (New York, Africana Press Co, 1977), p.48.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p.48.

cultural orientation, predominantly Arab and Muslim, underscores its important links with the Middle East<sup>3</sup>.

North Africa has been exposed to many different cultures, and thus is tied to those cultures. For instance, North Africa is an important component of the Arab World, and it shares its culture, language and religion. It is also a significant part of the continent of Africa. It gave its name to the continent from the Arabic Ifrikia (which actually referred to Tunisia). Because of their location and historic significance, the North African countries also have to learn to cope with a legacy of ties to the European continent as well<sup>4</sup>.

So close to Europe, and yet so far, it can be said that the North African region is still an unknown land to Europeans. Any understanding of the area remains superficial. The few who are interested in this part of the world are often looking for the exotic rather than for an objective understanding of the land and its people<sup>5</sup>.

It is clear, on the other hand, that the European Community cannot ignore this region, because the future of North Africa is important not only for the general stability of the larger Mediterranean region, but also for the internal

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<sup>3</sup>Nelson, H D, Morocco a Country Study, (Washington, D.C, University Press, 1985), p.21.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>Spencer, Claire, The Maghreb in the 1990s: Political and economic Developments in Algeria, Adelph Paper, (London, the international institute for strategic studies, 1993.), p.274.

cohesion of the European countries themselves. It is estimated that nearly five million North Africans currently live in Europe. They constitute the largest immigrant population of France, and a sizeable portion of those in Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

As a result of the large North African community living in Europe, and especially in France, the management of issues in Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco has become as much a concern for Europe as for the three countries themselves. The development of any issue on the one shore of the Mediterranean will affect its resolution on the other. As a matter of fact, the French government is now very concerned about what is happening in Algeria, and many analysts think that the internal instability of this country could hold both immediate and long term implications for its European neighbors, such as having to deal with a large North African immigrant population. European colonization denied the Maghreb any political or social role. For a long time the North Africans "were simply infidels and Barbarians"<sup>6</sup>.

The 20th century has been one of frustration, drama, and turbulence for the people of this land. French colonization plunged the three North African countries into a seemingly endless identity crisis, through which the region struggled for decades to gain independence. The cost of independence

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<sup>6</sup>Valenci, Lucette, On the Eve Of Colonialism, p .26.

was very high in human lives, in natural resources, and in the most precious commodity, time. More than thirty years after independence, these countries are still struggling with economic, social, and political problems<sup>7</sup>.

Now, at the end of the 20th century, the North African countries must look to the future and find the best strategy for resolving the dilemma of their underdevelopment. The destiny of the people of this land depends on how the countries of the Maghreb (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Libya, and Mauritania) will react to changes in the global order. In the new global order, which results from the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of new challenges to world stability, the region of the Maghreb has to wake up and conduct an inventory, not only of its previous policies, but especially of its agenda for the future.

The world is changing rapidly, and is allowing no room for hesitation or error. Many nations have come to understand the necessity of rethinking their management strategies. The Europeans are actually working to achieve the unification of the European continent. After almost a half century, the two Germanies are once again unified. The Gulf States in the Middle East have established the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). The two Yemen have established their goal of unification. There is also the matter of the unification of

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<sup>7</sup>Ridha Al Keffi, Journal le temps, January 17, 1994 Tunis.

the North Korean peninsula. All of this change in the world should be a stimulus for the North African countries to promote more cooperation within the region, for, if they are unable to form mutually beneficial relationships, they will be increasingly isolated.

Since their independence 30 years ago, (Tunisia and Morocco: 1956, Algeria: 1962), the common thread linking the region can be summed up in the phrase "crisis of identity." Over the last thirty years, the three states have struggled in different ways, and sometimes using different ideologies in their struggle for national cohesion and economic development. More than 75% of their populations are under 25 years of age, which means that the majority of their present populations were not alive during the struggle for independence, or are too young to even remember the aims of the nationalist movements. The new generation has sought to replace the heroes of independence, because its needs and expectations are different. The people of this region are now looking toward the integration of the entire Maghreb, seeking to make it a unified community, offering unity among people who share a common heritage.

Since February, 1989 and the signing of the unity agreement (The Arab Maghreb Unity Agreement), the geo-political Maghreb has been formalized to include Libya and

Mauritania<sup>8</sup>. But, whatever the boundaries of this union, its core remains the three northwest state countries (Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia).

These countries are so closely bound that any social or political event occurring in one state could tremendously effect the social and political life of the immediate neighboring countries.

The future of the world remains unclear and uncertain because the world's resources continue to shrink, and its geopolitics keep changing. Dealing with economic, social, political, and environmental issues in the coming century will be very challenging for the next generations.

Some countries have already chosen their strategy for increasing regional cooperation as, for example, the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the US, Canada, and Mexico. It is reasonable to wonder what the future of the North African countries will be, and what the best approach and strategy will be to meet the needs of these countries. With this in mind, the objective of this research is to perform an analysis of the history of the three countries of the North African region (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) and the political, economic and social processes at work in the region.

The lesson learned from the experiences of the European

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<sup>8</sup>Spencer, Claire, The Maghreb in the 1990s, p. 274.

Community will help to describe the best model for the Maghreb countries, and enable an understanding of economic, social, environmental, and political trends and their potential impact on the future of this region.

The primary research question of this project is: what are the achievement and prospects of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), what are the expectations of the people of this region in this New World global order?

Chapter II is a review of the general background of three countries of the Arab Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia). It outlines general information concerning this region, as well as information related to the geography, population, and history of the region.

Chapter III examines and analyzes the nature of the three societies in the present, focusing on political, economic, and external considerations. Chapter IV focuses on the economic prospects for the region, and an analysis of the internal and external conditions shaping the future of the Maghreb. The current political trends in these three countries, and their relationship with the Arab World, the European community, and the United States (as discussed in Chapter III), will be the basis of this analysis. Chapter V reviews the prospects of Maghreb cooperation. Finally, as conclusion, chapter VI presents a literature review of the integrative process theory as applied to the Maghreb region.



## II. GENERAL BACKGROUND

### A. THE LAND

In Arabic, the word Maghreb means "occident". It was the nomadic Arabic invaders in the seventh century A.D who gave the region the name of "Jaziret Al Maghrib", meaning the island of the West<sup>9</sup>. In addition, the word Maghreb also means sunset. The region is virtually self-contained, and is bounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the North, the Atlantic Ocean to the West, the great Sahara to the South, and by hundreds of miles of desert to the East. The term "North Africa" (Afrique du Nord) came into being during its 130 years of European colonial rule. Today the term is used by the peoples of the Maghreb themselves when referring to the three countries, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. This region is today the "Western" Arab World, as opposed to the "Eastern" Arab countries of the Middle East (the Mashrek)<sup>10</sup>.

The region of North Africa resembles Chile in shape, but stretches East and West, rather than North and South. Access to this land is barred by formidable ranges of mountains. These barriers generally follow a Northeast to Southwest line

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<sup>9</sup>Entelis, John P., Comparative Politics of North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), (New York, Syracuse University press, 1980), p.2.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p 2.

beginning in lower Morocco with the Atlas mountains (altitude 1200 feet), and reaching the Aures system in eastern Tunisia (4500 feet). Mountains and highlands cover roughly one fourth of the total area of Modern Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. They form a rather formidable and continuous barrier inside the Mediterranean coastal area at various depths from the coastline.

Geographically, this region is divided into two zones that are very different in their natural features:

- In the North, the "useful" land, Mediterranean and Subtropical.
- In the South, the sahara.

Thus, the land area of the Mediterranean constitutes almost 765,000 square kilometers, and the Saharan 2,052,000 square kilometers. The total area of the region is 2,817,000 square kilometers (Algeria: 2,205,000 km<sup>2</sup>, Morocco: 448,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and Tunisia 165,000 km<sup>2</sup>). Rainfall is insufficient. Almost 1/4 of the region receives no more than 400 millimeters of rain annually, the minimum required to support the Mediterranean ecosystem.

The geography, the climate, and the vegetation allow one to observe in all the regions two faces: a Mediterranean face and another sub-saharan face. Large flatland can be found in each country. In Morocco, the Atlantic plain extends from

Tangier to Mogador, and a fine mesa connects Sebta with Kenitra. The Valley of Moulaya and the Eastern steppes compose the most fertile area in the country.

Algeria, the middle state, is composed of low plains surrounding the cities of Oran and Mostaganem, while the Chelif Valley runs parallel to the coast towards Oran. The Tunisian steppe from Hammamet to Gabes, the Medjerda Valley and the Mateur plain provide the country with a proportionally greater lowland area than either of its neighboring states.

#### **B. THE PEOPLE**

The original inhabitants of North Africa were the Berbers<sup>11</sup>. The Arabs arrived in the mid-seventh century, and over a period of several hundred years managed to transform the Berber-populated Maghreb into an integral part of the Arab World. In terms of culture, language, and religion, the Arabs profoundly and permanently affected North African society. The Europeans, too, have made significant contributions and helped to shape the human scene in North Africa. In fact, despite their relatively brief presence in the region and their virtual isolation from native society, the Europeans induced profound and, in some cases, irreversible changes in that society<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p .4.

Among other much smaller groups that inhabited or continue to inhabit, North Africa, are the Spanish Muslims (Andalously), the Jews, the Turks, and the Negroes. But with political independence, the mass exodus of Europeans, the creation of the State of Israel, and the long term process of Arabization and Islamization, the Maghreb of today is ethnically, culturally, and religiously homogenous.

Compared to the Middle East, the Maghreb is much more religiously unified, with the Malikite rite or Sunni Islamic sect predominating.

### **1. The Native Population**

The Berbers came to the Maghreb probably as early as the second millennium BC, sixteen centuries before the Arab conquest. There is no precise information about their origins, which even today remain a mystery. On the eve of the 21st century, only a small number of Berbers exist in Morocco and Algeria. In Algeria, the Berber population numbers almost eight million, centered primarily in the remote area of the Jurjura Mountains<sup>13</sup>. In Tunisia, in contrast, where they have

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<sup>13</sup>The Berbers represent 30% of the actual Algerian population, and are settled primarily in the two principal cities of Tiziouzou and Bejaya. They are descended from the native population, and lived for many centuries in the inaccessible mountains of the Aures and the desert. They moved there to avoid any contact with the various invaders of the region. During the Ottoman empire and the French occupation, and even after the independence, the Berbers have managed to maintain a unique identity. Algeria witnessed three crises related to the Berbers issue. The first arose during 1945 within the party of the people (Hizb Ashab) from

been completely integrated.

## 2. The Arabization

The Arabs came in two principal waves. One at the beginning of the conquest led by Okba Ibn Nafi, commander of the Arab Islamic Army<sup>14</sup> dating from the mid seventh century and spanning the following several hundred years. The first arrivals have been estimated to number 15,000<sup>15</sup>. This group was made up of invading armies, cavaliers, tribesmen, and all the human baggage that goes along with occupying a foreign country. Through intermarriage with native women, the invading group began to be diluted very early. The second wave involved several full scale tribal immigrations, which began with the Beni Hellal and the Beni Sellim tribes who had been deposed of their territory in Egypt and driven westward across

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which emerged the leadership of the independence movement. The issue was about the definition of the Algerian identity in the party charter. The second crisis started just after independence, with the armed rebellion led by Ait Ahmad against the president Ben Bella. The third crisis occurred in the 1980s, and was led by the same Ait Ahmad, who obliged the president Chadli Ben Jedid to admit the political pluralism, and the recognition of the Berber identity as a component of the Algerian society.

<sup>14</sup>In 670, Okba Ibn Nafi, under the authority of the monarch Muawiyah, founded AlQuayrawan in central Tunisia and used it as a base of operations against the Berbers tribes. Okba was said by tradition to have advanced until the waves of the Atlantic ocean stopped his horse. Okba suffered a martyr's death in 683 near Biskra, in east Algeria.

<sup>15</sup>Knapp, Wilfrid, North West Africa : A Political and Economic survey, (London, Oxford university press, 1943), p.21.

the Libyan desert. They moved into Ifrikya, (modern Tunisia) from about the year 1050 on, and then gradually inched their way across North Africa<sup>16</sup>.

Between these incursions, like any new country of promise and adventure, the Maghreb received a steady trickle of individual immigrants from the centers of Arab life elsewhere. They came from Baghdad and Basra, Cairo, and Andalousia in Spain. These were people of quality: intellectuals, religious servants, merchants, and craftsmen. The urban newcomers were an elite group, carrying the torch of learning and religion. They established centers of civilization and foyers of Islamic culture.

### **3. The European Invasion**

The French occupation of North Africa lasted almost one century. This project will not address the question of whether or not this occupation was in the interest of the indigenous population of the region, but it is clear that the little that the Europeans did in this land was intended to satisfy their own needs. However, the European presence in North Africa all these years did accomplish many fine things. These were the colonists (settlers) who came to stay and to exploit this land in quest of personal wealth, denying the native population any hope of status and equality. The impact

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<sup>16</sup>Hahn, Lorna, North Africa :Nationalism to Nationhood, (Washington D.C, Public Affairs press, 1960),p.43..

of this foreign occupation on the people of the region has been very important. The culture itself has been deeply influenced, including the social life, the language, and even the way of doing everyday things. Until recently, for instance, French was the primary language for public administration and education.

### **C. THE HISTORY**

#### **1. Introduction**

The North West African region has long been close to the center of the stage of history. Its past dates back three thousand years. This pivotal position, contributes to making this region the home of many civilizations. It has been subject to important invasions, which in turn shaped its institutions, the mentality of its people, and its posture in today's world. Indeed, the Berbers, who were the native population of this land, sustained five major thrusts from the outside, and many minor ones<sup>17</sup>. The Phoenician and the Carthaginian imprint lasted a millennium, from approximately 1200 BC. The Carthaginian civilization, which was more advanced, made a deep impression on the people of this region.

Rome's imprint was felt in 146 BC, with the fall of Carthage, and lasted uninterruptedly for nearly seven centuries. In fact, the casual traveler can find almost as

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<sup>17</sup>Entelis, John P, p.11.

many Roman ruins in North Africa as in some European countries, including roads, monuments, dams, and bridges. The Emperor Septimus Severus, was an African, and St. Augustan, who profoundly moved the Christian world, may have been a Punic or Berber.

Vandals and Byzantine filled the gap left by a fading Rome. For two centuries, German tribesmen entering Africa from Spain and the Byzantine, disembarking from the Mediterranean, flooded into Roman Africa. But the Vandal and Byzantine impact upon latter day civilization in North Africa was relatively minor<sup>18</sup>.

The Arabs' imprint is the most important of all the conquerors. The Arabs succeeded in doing what all the previous invaders failed to achieve, starting with the Romans and Byzantine, and moving to the Spanish, Turks and French. The Arabic language and the Islamic religion have remained deeply imbedded in the people, achieving a permanent status. The Berber population was more receptive to the Arab way of life. In fact, it is very interesting to try to understand why the Europeans (the Romans first and the French later), were rejected and turned away, and why the Arabs remained<sup>19</sup>.

Although both came to this land as conquerors, the outcome of their occupations was very different. The reason

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p.13.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p.13.



was that the Europeans felt themselves expatriates in this region, while the Arabs felt at home.

Arab administration was less formal, less bureaucratic, and less imposing than that of the Romans. The Romans, and later the French, tried to assimilate the people of this land. The Arabs came with kindred institutions, and struck a receptive policy of equity between themselves and the native population.

## **2. The Modern History**

The European occupation of the region started in the 19th century, and naturally varied according to whether the rulers were French, Italian, or Spanish. French intervention started with the occupation of Algeria first, in 1830, followed by Tunisia in 1881, and Morocco in 1912. It lasted, in the main, almost one century (75 years in Tunisia, 44 years in Morocco, and 132 years in the case of Algeria). During this period of colonization, the population of the Maghreb suffered a lot, and would ultimately pay a high price for its independence. It is also important to stress the negative impact and influence of these years of colonization on the future of the region as a whole.

The French exercised two different statuses in the Maghreb countries. Tunisia and Morocco were under a protectorate mandate, and Algeria was considered as part of the French territory: French Algeria (l'Algerie Francaise).

### **3. The Struggle for Independence**

For the Maghreb countries, the path to independence was, like all such liberation movements, very difficult. But in the case of Algeria, the price paid for this independence was very bloody in the cost of human lives. World War II aroused aspirations of independence in this region, because of the economic assistance and the human sacrifice rendered by these colonies to the Metropole. But these hopes were dashed in the post-war peace.

#### **a. Tunisian Independence**

In Tunisia, the struggle for independence lasted more than 30 years, a mixture of armed confrontation and political process. Political negotiations with the colonial authorities were sustained by military operations of the Fellagha<sup>20</sup> in the field. The French protectorate had not swept away the traditional elites, society was less polarized than in Algeria, the Bey, who officially continued to rule, provided a focal point for the agitation of the first nationalists. The new generation of nationalists, led by Habib Bourguiba<sup>21</sup> challenged the older generation and

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<sup>20</sup>The Fellaghas are the armed elements or guerrillas in the mountains who fought against the occupation.

<sup>21</sup>Laroui, Abdallah, Histoire de la Tunisie, (New Jersey, Princeton university, 1977), p.56.

captured control of the political party Destour. Bourguiba<sup>22</sup>, after several years of struggle, forced the French authorities to grant Tunisia full autonomy in June, 1955. Less than one year later, on March 20, 1956, Tunisian independence was formally declared<sup>23</sup>.

**b. The Moroccan Search for Independence**

In Morocco, the charismatic figure of the Sultan Mohammed V served as a rallying point for the Moroccan people. The colonial authorities were confronted for many years with unending demonstrations and acts of disobedience. The deportation of the Moroccan leaders and the acts of repression did not stop the violence and turbulence within the country. On March 2, 1956 the country was formally declared independent<sup>24</sup>.

**c. The Algerian War for Independence**

As mentioned earlier, the Algerian case was more violent and more painful than that of its neighbors. In its struggle for independence Algeria initiated a costly war of liberation. France considered Algeria to be part of its

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<sup>22</sup>In 1943, the small entrepreneurial and French educated classes challenged the old generation. They took control of the political party "Destour" and renamed it the "New Destour". They fashioned from it a political party driven by an ideology of secular nationalism, but organized at the grass roots level through labor and students organizations.

<sup>23</sup>Entelis, John, p.38.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid, p.35.

territory, and was not willing to compromise on this issue. Indeed, France has always considered the Algerian question an internal matter, and would not accept any compromise on this issue. The inflexibility of the French authorities and the determination of the Algerian people resulted in a bloody war of liberation. Algeria lost at least one million human lives in this confrontation<sup>25</sup>. And in November, 1962, General De Gaulle, against the opposition of the French colonists and some military leaders, granted Algeria its independence.

As we will see in this work, history is an important factor of the North African region. Indeed three thousand years of history are its source of strength and weakness. Strength, because its history has always been a key factor in encouraging peoples to look forward and influence events. Its weakness stems from the fact that all these waves of invaders, especially the French colonization, badly harmed the capacity of the Maghreb region to resolve its actual political and economic dilemmas.

The outcomes of the war of liberation in Algeria affected its society, and for many years shaped the economic and political processes of the country. Indeed, the harsh conditions of occupation experienced by the Algerians were the key factors in pushing the independent State of Algeria into the Soviet sphere of influence for many years.

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<sup>25</sup>La guerre d'Algerie.

The struggle for independence in each of the three North African countries, as was noted in previous paragraphs, was different. Tunisia and Morocco got their independence through long processes of military, as well as by political confrontation. However, political discussions, in the case of Algeria were nonexistent. It achieved its sovereignty almost exclusively through military means.

The battle between Algeria and France continued even after liberation. There was another war over Algerian natural resources and economic assets<sup>26</sup>. The French didn't do anything to ease the conflict or ensure a smooth and normal transition. The date of liberation was also the date of divorce.

The nature of this special relationship prevailing between independent Algeria and France for many years prohibited any opportunity for achieving economic and political stability in the region through a confederation of the three North African countries. Tunisia and Morocco, which were moderate and favored further cooperation and the establishment of close economic ties with the west (especially France), and Algeria who moved further toward the socialist bloc.

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<sup>26</sup>The Franco-Algerian problem over the Sahara.

### III. NORTH AFRICA ON THE EVE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

#### A. INTERNAL CONDITIONS

##### 1. Politics

The political processes in the three countries of the Maghreb region have been characterized by the same trends. Indeed, as far back as the pre-independence period, nationalist movements in these countries began as direct reaction to Western colonial rule. At the same time, they were related to the wider revival of Arab Nationalist consciousness that made itself felt in the mid-nineteenth century. Because of these origins, North African nationalism has continued to display dual and sometimes conflicting tendencies.

The last few decades, however, will be remembered as the beginning of a period of difficult adjustment to a number of new and powerful realities that are profoundly reshaping the role of the state in economic and political decision making. In all of the Maghreb countries, whatever the political regime adopted, the state-as-institutional mechanism by which the extraction and distribution of resources and law and order is maintained has become omnipresent. After almost three decades, the regimes have reached the bitter conclusion that the state can no longer act as the only, or even

principal participant. It must now learn to deal openly with counteractive tendencies in society at large, and must recognize that the state's dominating role has often made it the focus rather than the mediator of conflict.

The 1990s seem to be the decade of reshaping the role of the state, and this implies the accommodation of different groups within each country. Political and economic experience over almost four decades has led to virtually the same outcome in each country. All three countries are at the same starting point: how to get out of the problem of underdevelopment and bring about an effective political and economic participation of their constituencies.

As mentioned above, the intent of this project is not to analyze nor to evaluate the political processes within each country. The following paragraphs will be only a review of the political forces at work in these three countries, as far as those forces have an effect on the economic integration of the region.

**a. Morocco**

Morocco is a constitutional monarchy. During the nationalist movement for independence, the king represented the symbolic leadership of the native population. For a long time, in the minds of the masses, national independence and political unification were intimately associated with monarchical authority.

Although the Moroccan constitution allows a multiparty system, the king exercises comprehensive powers in the absence of any effective opposition.<sup>27</sup> Although an apparent political pluralism seems to prevail, the political scene is monopolized by the monarch's personal charisma.

The Moroccan governmental system does not conform to the political practices of Western monarchies, in which a constitution functions to circumscribe the royal office - in most cases to such a degree that its powers are only nominal. In case of Morocco, the constitution strongly reinforces the role of the monarch as both secular and religious leader. This constitution establishes modern political institutions and assigns to the king sufficient powers to ensure his control over the system that these combined institutions form<sup>28</sup>. The monarch appoints and dismisses the Prime Minister and other government ministers at will. He presides over all important government bodies, including the council of Ministers, the Supreme Council for National Development and Planning, the Supreme Council of Judiciary and the Supreme Council for Education<sup>29</sup>.

Despite the multiparty system installed by the constitution, the political process in Morocco continues to be

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<sup>27</sup>Nelson ,D Harold, Morocco a country study, p.235.

<sup>28</sup>The Constitution of 1972.

<sup>29</sup>Nelson, Harold D, p.240.



characterized by opposition political parties who are too weak and divided to establish a credible and effective posture in the country.<sup>30</sup>

**b. Algeria : Political Turmoil**

Algerian political processes in the post-independence period have been dominated by a small civil-military oligarchy, with remarkably little participation on the part of the masses.

Indeed, the military remains the most decisive force in Algerian politics. The political crisis into which the country was plunged in 1990, caused a great deal of societal harm. The struggle between the government and the radical religious militants makes daily news reports to this day. The government cracked down on the militants, and banned the "Front Islamic du Salut" (FIS).<sup>31</sup> However despite its success in popular mobilization, the FIS is not so unified as it appears. Indeed it involves at least four main streams<sup>32</sup>. The first movement, groups especially formers resistant during the liberation war. The second, the Muslim Brothers advocates

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<sup>30</sup>Entelis, John P, Comparative Politics : Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, (New York, Syracuse Press, 1980), p.72.

<sup>31</sup>FIS: Front Islamic du Salut, means Islamic Salvation Front. It was banned, and the parliamentary elections of January 1992 canceled after the threats made by Abassi Madani, and Ali Belhadj, both co-leaders of the FIS, who called for the Jihad against the state in June 1991.

<sup>32</sup>News Paper Ashark Alawsat Arab Affairs, January 17, 1992.

the return of Algeria to the real Islamic path. The third movement is called "Jend Allah" with other elements constituting the most extremist wing.

It is not easy to predict the final outcome of this struggle, but it is certain that the outcome will have an important impact on the other members of the Maghreb region.

**c. Tunisian Political Stability**

Since November 1987, Tunisia seems to be the most stable country in the region<sup>33</sup>. Indeed, despite the existence of political activism on the part of some extremist religious groups sustained by external influences, the government is steadily moving toward the liberalization of the political process in the country. This change is sustained by the economic performance realized by the government's economic approach.

During the last parliamentary election, almost eight political parties from the opposition participated, and they won 15% of the seats in the National Assembly<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup>In November 7, 1987, the time life President H. Bourguiba was removed from power according to the constitution. He was replaced by prime minister Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali, who stepped in to stop Tunisia's drift towards confrontation and radicalism. MR B Ali was confirmed as president in the elections of April 3, 1989.

<sup>34</sup>Tunisia Digest, Tunisian Embassy, Washington D.C, March 1994.

**d. The Western Sahara**

One of the most prominent barriers to the Maghreb integration is the Western Sahara issue. This single issue has dominated the entire political process in the region since 1975. The conflict over this land has upset the political systems of Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, and, to a lesser extent, Libya. According to some experts<sup>35</sup>, the Western Sahara dispute is not only a struggle between Morocco and the Polisario<sup>36</sup>, it "is part of a wider struggle for dominance in the Maghreb region between Morocco and Algeria." The issue has also seriously affected the Organization of African Unity (OAU), creating the most serious crisis in the Organization's history.

The Western Sahara was a Spanish colony from 1884 to 1976. Although it comprises a sizable area when viewed from a larger geographical perspective, the territory is only a small part of an enormous desert : the Sahara (or the Great Desert). The Spanish divided the territory into two parts along the 26th Parallel. The northern part is called Sakiet Al Hamra, and the southern area is named Rio De Oro. The area comprises a total of almost 102,703 square miles, and it is comparable in size to the United Kingdom. The climate is harsh and the soil is arid, but the area seems blessed with a

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<sup>35</sup>Adamis, John, Conflict in North West Africa, (Calif, Hoover Institute Press, 1983), p.15.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., Editor's forward.

variety of natural resources, including minerals.

Morocco's claim on the Western Sahara began in the early years of independence, and these claims have been asserted vigorously by most elements of the Moroccan political spectrum. At a more general level, this issue forms part of a larger claim to territory, expressed in the concept of Greater Morocco. Greater Morocco corresponds to the area ruled by the Almoravide dynasty in the eleventh and twelfth centuries<sup>37</sup>.

After Spain's departure from the territory in February 1976, Morocco and Mauritania tried to absorb the Sahara into their own national boundaries, against the diplomatic opposition of Algeria, and the military opposition of the Polisario<sup>38</sup>. But in August 1979, Mauritania withdrew from the conflict. Since this date Morocco has continued alone in confronting the Polisario front.

Despite Morocco's success on the battlefield, the dispute over this area remains. Morocco's military success at containing surprise attacks launched by the Polisario has not been matched in the diplomatic arena.

The major diplomatic struggle over the Sahara issue was played out in the Organization of Africa Unity (OAU).

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<sup>37</sup>Almoravide dynasty governed all the region of North Africa and a big part of Mali in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

<sup>38</sup>Polisario means front of liberation of the Sahara and the Rio de Oro.

By 1980, fifty percent (26 of 56) of the OAU members backed the admission of the Saharaoui Arab Democratic Republic (SADR)<sup>39</sup>. The recognition and support of Algeria for the SADR ended the diplomatic relations between it and Morocco.

Since mid-1987, the prospects for a political settlement of the 15 year-old Western Sahara conflict have improved significantly. Both Morocco and Algeria have moved closer to a settlement. In late October 1988, the General Secretary of the United Nations (UN) appointed a special representative for the Western Sahara question. His mandate was to work at narrowing the gap between the Moroccan and the Algerian positions, and specifically to arrange for a referendum on self determination, administered by the United Nations, in the disputed area.

The referendum seems to be the only formula acceptable to both Morocco and Algeria, the two keys players in this issue. The formula for referendum accommodates Morocco's deeply held desire to incorporate the Sahara, while at the same time allowing Algeria a face-saving retreat from its long time support of and international association with the Polisario Front and the SADR.

It is clear that both sides are facing international resistance and intransigence over giving up

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<sup>39</sup>Price ,David Lynn, Conflict in the Maghreb : the Western Sahara , (London, Institute for the study of conflict Press, 1981), p.17.

their initial policy. However, the rapprochement between Morocco and Algeria is strengthened at the regional level by the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), increasing the possibility of settling this dispute. Once reached, the agreement will be permanent, because it has a solid basis.

The cost of this regional tension has been very high for the economy. The military expenditures could be allocated to other, more useful, projects for improving the well-being of the region's population. The issue of the Western Sahara is one of the major barriers to achieving of the North African integration.

The AMU could be the best indicator that the region is moving toward better understanding, useful cooperation, and economic, social, and cultural integration.

**e. Revival of Fundamentalism**

The last quarter of the twentieth century has been marked by an awakening of extremists who use religion as a battle cry. The capitulation of the Shah of Iran in 1979, the high level of interventionism of the Catholic church in the political process of Latin America, and the murder of the Indian prime minister (Indira Gandhi) and her son Rajiv Gandhi by Sikh militants, are all indicators of the potential conflict between religious and democratic ideals.

The religious movement has become a serious challenge to many political systems. Religious extremists

claim the right to be involved in the decision-making process, and ultimately the right to rule. During the struggle for independence, religious movements in North Africa, like Liberation Theology in Latin America, and the Islamic Brotherhood in the Middle East, were very active.

After independence, those forces started to seek more involvement in the political processes of their respective countries. They succeeded in mobilizing supporters, and anticipated more responsibility as agents of political and social change.

For the purpose of this project I will analyze only the case of the Muslim fundamentalists. Indeed, in 1979, the Islamic Revolution succeeded to remove the Shah, and brought down one of the most secular governments in the Middle East region. This success has prompted other groups to make the same attempt to weaken the existing political structure in various states.

The association of the Muslim brotherhood was founded in Ismalia (Egypt) in 1928 by Hassen El Bana, five years after the creation of the Young Men's Christian Association in Cairo<sup>40</sup>. Both associations took an active part in the Egyptian nationalist movement.

The majority of the movement's adherents were young students studying at the University of Cairo and at

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<sup>40</sup>Isha Musa Huseini, The Muslim Brothers.

institutions in other big cities. For the most part they were originally from rural areas. They took an active part in the fight against the English colonialists. They led demonstrations, made speeches and went on strike. During the same period Egypt witnessed a vicious dispute between conservatives and those who advocated modernism.

Intellectual and political disputes in Egyptian society favored the growth of social awareness, and subsequently led to the emergence of the fundamentalist forces as a serious challenge to the status quo. The movement survived many attacks<sup>41</sup>, and was able to extend its ideology to other countries, such as Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and North Africa. In the Maghreb region, nationalism and religion were always closely associated. Adherence to the Islamic Party had been one of the few means available to express opposition to the European occupation.

Until 1979, religious groups coexisted with the existing government, but the 1980s witnessed a revival of fundamentalist activism<sup>42</sup> in the region. The success of the Iranian revolution in 1979, and the activism of the Ayatollah Khomeini in exporting fundamentalist ideology, contributed to the resurgence of the religious context in the Islamic world.

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<sup>41</sup>The most important action against the Brother Muslims was led by Jamal Abdenasser in 1956.

<sup>42</sup>I will use the term of fundamentalism instead of Muslim movement.



The economic crisis of the 1980s, subsequent to the demise of national development strategies<sup>43</sup>, is also a key factor in the revival of fundamentalist trends in social and political contests.

Among all of the North African countries, Algeria experienced the most painful case of social change related to religion. After independence, the Algerian government imposed control over the religious establishment. In 1980, the Islamic fundamentalist revival reached Algeria. The revival of religious fervor was found especially among young people, disappointed by a society in the throes of rapid industrialization, chaotic urbanization, clashing cultural values, and high unemployment. The champion of this religious upheaval was the Front Islamic du Salut (FIS)<sup>44</sup>. Between 1979 and 1982, the FIS repeatedly defied authority by taking over official mosques and by occupying university classrooms and public buildings. The movement served as a channel for protest against joblessness, a housing shortage, and the economic crisis<sup>45</sup>.

In 1982, the government's attitude became more harsh after clashes between fundamentalist and leftist

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<sup>43</sup>Layachi, Azedine & Harache Abdelkader, Arab Study Quarterly, (volume 14, number 1 & 2, Spring/Summer 1992), p .69.

<sup>44</sup>FIS means Front Islamic for salvation.

<sup>45</sup>Journal Jeune Afrique, Mars 1990.

students at the University of Algier. Many members of the FIS were arrested, and the government party press embarked on a campaign to demonstrate that the movement was manipulated from outside the country.

In 1991, the FIS was permitted to take part in parliamentary elections. Their political success did not last long, however<sup>46</sup>, Soon President Chadly Ben Jedid resigned<sup>47</sup>. The cancellation of the elections and the trial of FIS leaders thrust the country into political crisis. It is impossible to predict the eventual outcome of this struggle.

Among the states of the region, Tunisia has gone the farthest in modernization. It is also the most secular state, where separation between state and religion is clearly defined. However, pressure from fundamentalists increased after Tunisia's neighbor, Algeria, recognized the FIS as a political party. Other international events have also contributed to activism in this country<sup>48</sup>. The Tunisian government's approach to dealing with fundamentalism was different from that of Algeria. Wisely, the Tunisian government did not recognize the MIT (le Mouvement Islamique

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<sup>46</sup>The FIS shocked the world by winning 188 out of 288 seats in the Algerian parliament.

<sup>47</sup>President Chadly Ben Jedid seceded to Haouari Boumediene who died in 1979.

<sup>48</sup>The Iranian revolution, the Palestinian issue, the war in Afghanistan, and the Gulf war had a big impact on the increase of this political contest.

Tunisian) as a political party. Its members were not allowed to participate in the political process, although they did change their name from MIT to Annahda<sup>49</sup>. The government maintains that Islam is the state religion<sup>50</sup>, and there is no need for a party to organize around religion to reach political goals; maintaining that it would be senseless to mix religion and politics.

Even in Morocco, where the King's authority is based on religious belief, the ground seems fertile enough for the development of a popular Islamic fundamentalist movement<sup>51</sup>. The political liberalization that has taken place in Algeria since October 1988, and the legalization of the Islamist parties in that country, encouraged Moroccan religious movements to become more visible and to engage in a bolder political activism, albeit limited to mosques. The street demonstrations that took place in Morocco during the Gulf War seemed like a veiled challenge to the monarch himself.

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<sup>49</sup>The MIT (Tunisian Islamic Movement) changed its name to anahda responding to the government rules that no political party could have religious pretention.

<sup>50</sup>The Tunisian constitution stipulates in its first article the islamic character of the country.

<sup>51</sup>The Arab Study Quarterly, (volume 14 number 1&2, Spring/Summer 1992, AAUG and the Institute of Arab Studies 1992).

## **2. The Economic Viability**

The existing authorities in all of the countries of the Maghreb region must prove themselves in the economic arena to ensure stability. Each of the three countries has adopted a different pattern of economic development. They have, however, shared a common characteristic: the state is the main actor in the economic sector, and performs all vital functions. Nevertheless, in recent years there has been a major movement toward free markets and more liberalization of the economic sector in general.

The trend toward privatization is more noticeable in Tunisia. Morocco's economy is more liberalized than that of Algeria, where liberalization has been both late and tentative. The major problems of the economy of the region are commonly described as stemming from the structural inequalities between the northern coastal industrialized sector and the traditional agricultural sectors of the south.

### **a. The Tunisian Economy**

Tunisia is manifestly the smallest and least materially endowed country in the region. The success of its economic policy and reform program has placed Tunisia in a leading position. With an average of 8.5% of real GDP growth since 1991<sup>52</sup>, Tunisia's economy is highly rated by

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<sup>52</sup>Source : Document sur le VIII plan de development 1992-1996(26 Tunis).

institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank<sup>53</sup>.

The VIIIth Plan for development (1992-1996) is considered by the Tunisian government as the great challenge for growth and employment<sup>54</sup>. A major portion of the plan is devoted to continuing the reform process in a global and coherent way. The Plan also predicts a growth rate equal to 2.5% (compared to 2.2% in the previous plan), the evolution of the PNB by 6% (previously 4.2%), an increase in revenue per head of 4.2% (previously 2.7%), an increase in investment of 9.6% (previously 5%). It is also useful to note that the VIII Plan emphasizes the importance of the alimentation security which remains one of the main objectives of economic development. By 1996, the current plan estimates that agricultural production will meet 93% of the domestic demand for meat, 71% of that for milk products, and 100% of that for wheat and its derivatives<sup>55</sup>.

**b. The Moroccan Economy**

The economic resources of Morocco must meet the needs of a rapidly expanding population. The primary natural resource is phosphate, of which the country has large

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Journal le Monde: "Tunisie le bon eleve du FMI" avril 1993.

<sup>54</sup>L'Union du Maghreb Arab : etude par pays. Rapport etabli pour le service du centre CETIME 1992.

<sup>55</sup>Source: Document sur le VIII Plan de development de la Tunisie 1992-1996. Tunis, 1993.

reserves<sup>56</sup>. The Moroccan economy has recently suffered from the burden of costs associated with the Western Sahara, combined with the effects of poor harvests after several years of drought, and depressed world prices for phosphate. The economy also remains dependent on tourism and agricultural products to the European community.

The year 1992 was a bad year for the Moroccan economy. The level of production decreased 30% from that of 1990. The immediate effect of this situation was the deterioration of the commercial balance by 28.6%<sup>57</sup>.

It is also possible to note improvement in some economic indicators, such as the reduction of the budget deficit, and the balance of payments. These trends are reinforced by current projects to reform the financial sector, as well as the movement toward decentralized planning and privatization of the economic sector as a whole.

### ***c. The Algerian Economy***

Algeria is the most naturally endowed country in the region, with abundant and diversified resources. Despite this advantage, the Algerian economy seems to be in very bad shape. The economy in Algeria has always been "a matter of

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<sup>56</sup>Morocco holds possibly one half of the world's reserves.

<sup>57</sup>Source : Revue d'information numero 193, fevrier 1993.  
Banque Marocaine du Commerce Exterieur (BMCE), Casablanca, Maroc.

politics, even more than that of most countries"<sup>58</sup>. There was a deliberate decision to bring the economy under the control of the state. This decision was based on the geography and history of the country<sup>59</sup>. Decades after independence, the Algerian economy was still almost totally government controlled, with the central government entirely responsible for economic planning, development, and administration<sup>60</sup>.

Starting in 1980, the Algerian government began to recognize the necessity of achieving political legitimacy through economic performance. It was realized that "good politics does not always make for good economic policies." Thus, Algeria joined the worldwide movement toward decentralized planning and privatization of the public sector<sup>61</sup>.

## **B. EXTERNAL INFLUENCES**

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<sup>58</sup>Knopp, Wilfrid, North West Africa a Political and Economic Survey, (London, Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 120.

<sup>59</sup>The bloody liberation war against the French occupation pushed the Algerians to balance the socialist block and embrace its philosophy of economic development. This theory prioritizes the heavy industry and neglects the agricultural and the light industry.

<sup>60</sup>Entelis, John P, Comparative Politics of North Africa, (New York, Syracuse University Press, 1980), p.117.

<sup>61</sup>Arab Studies Quarterly, (Illinois, Guest editor, November 2, 199, 2) volume 14.

## 1. The Enlargement of the European Community and its Impact on the Maghreb

Since 1969, Tunisia and Morocco have enjoyed an associate status in dealing with the European Community. Algeria made its own agreement somewhat later. The proximity of the region and its colonial legacy have always given the Maghreb a special importance to the European countries. The cooperation agreement signed in 1976<sup>62</sup> was re-negotiated approximately every four years.

This preferential access did have a limited effectiveness, however, and did not live up to North African expectations. Three decades later the region remains an unequal European partner. Little more than 1% of the EC's exports are to the Maghreb, yet account for almost two thirds of the Maghreb's exports<sup>63</sup>.

The North African countries have always been aware of this advantage. They constantly tried to negotiate better conditions, acknowledging that even limited preferential access is better than none at all. On January 1, 1986, Spain and Portugal were officially granted full membership. These two countries competed on much the same terms as their three

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<sup>62</sup>These cooperation agreements signed separately between the European Community and the three countries (Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco) provides a special status for the industrial products admitted into the Community duty free, and quota free, while the agricultural products were subject to tariffs. The cooperation agreements made also provisions for development aid to these three countries.

<sup>63</sup>The Economist: North Africa Unity, May 19, 1990, p.48.



North African counterparts<sup>64</sup>.

Indeed, with their inclusion, Spain and Portugal will enjoy even greater preferences for their products in EC markets. Their agricultural industries will be enhanced even more by EC protectionist measures, including tariffs, quotas, and timetables.

The philosophy of the European Community's Customs Union was clearly stated:

Given the EC's exclusive nature, it can be expected to safeguard the interest of its new and old Southern Mediterranean members at the expense of its nonmembers' interest. From a juridical standpoint, and due to the very nature of the customs union, members states' products are always to be preferred over outside competition<sup>65</sup>.

The European agricultural policy (CAP) harmed Maghreban agriculture. The EC agricultural policy (CAP) encourages the community's farmers to produce more. The EC intervention boards support the prices by buying excess production. The board then sells some of these products on the world market. This act has been met by Moroccan, Tunisian and Algerian accusations claiming that European Community dumping has contributed to declining world prices for their

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<sup>64</sup>Toukalis, Loukas, The European Community and its Mediterranean Enlargement (London, Allen and Unwin Press, 1981), pp.53,79.

<sup>65</sup>Ginsburg, Roy Howard, The European Community.

agricultural goods<sup>66</sup>.

The Maghreb countries have much more reason to worry, as they must also face increasing protectionist barriers against their semi-manufactured goods. The enlargement of the European Community brought change in their social policy as well, calling for better integration of migrant workers from Spain and Portugal at the expense of Maghreban migrant workers.

After accession, the number of Spanish and Portuguese workers in the EC are expected to rise above their already high levels. They will enjoy the free movements of labor provisions of the Rome Treaty. Non-member migrants will not. EC unemployment levels will remain high and Basin governments will face the return of perhaps tens of thousands of migrant nationals to already employment-scarce economies. Because Spain and Portugal have significant numbers of unemployed citizens, the Maghreban countries will also lose the European market as a vital outlet for their unemployed<sup>67</sup>.

## **2. The Arab World Or Maghreb Mashrek<sup>68</sup>**

The Maghrebi people have strong sentimental links with the Arab world. Societal, spiritual, cultural, and linguistic links combine to emphasize the place and role played by North

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<sup>66</sup>The European agricultural policy: integrated Mediterranean Program (IMP), emphasizes the development of the common agricultural, while supporting the Community's farmers. This policy will produce further problems of dumping and eroding the world's prices.

<sup>67</sup>Kerr, Antony, The Common Market and how it works, (London, Oxford Pergamon, 1986), p.80.

<sup>68</sup>Mashrek (sunrise) is the Arabic word for the Gulf Region.

Africa in the Arab world. The constitution of the Maghreban countries states clearly that Arabic is the official national language. And, there is no doubt about the importance of this linguistic factor<sup>69</sup>.

The language is ultimately more than mere communication.. The language is the verbalization of shared beliefs, fraternal bonds, communal historical ties, and the joint expectations of the people.

The Maghreb shares with the Middle East the common religion of Islam, although the North African countries differ by their Maliki rite<sup>70</sup>.

Having been a crossroads of many civilizations and many cultures, the Maghrebi society has always been characterized by its tolerance and its open-minded nature. Carthage, Romans, Arabs, and Europeans, met in this land to produce the Maghreban society.

Without going back to the ancient history of Carthage, the cultural openness and tolerance remain the principal quality of the people of this region. In contemporary international issues, the Maghreb decision-makers have always been characterized by moderation, realism, and wisdom.

The best example is the Maghreb stand on the Israel-Arab issue. While supporting the Arab cause, the

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<sup>69</sup>Callagher, F Charles, North African Problems and prospects, Part III, p.1.

<sup>70</sup>Islam is divided into two sects: Sunnites and Shiites. The Sunnites are divided into four sub-sects or schools of jurisprudence (Hanafite, Malikite, Chafite, and Hanbalite).

Maghreb has always advocated the moderation and the political negotiations as the only means of settlement of the Palestinian question. The former Tunisian president Habib Bourguiba, proposed in 1965:

A new approach recognizing Israel and calling for negotiations intended not as capitulation but as a way to force the opposite party to conference table and win major concessions by it, he pointed out that the intransigence of the Arabs in rejecting all discussions with Israel gave it a considerable propaganda advantage by allowing it to portray itself as eager for reasonable settlement which its opponents refused to consider<sup>71</sup>.

Bourguiba's moderation and realism was turned down by the Arabs of the Middle East at this time. In one of his speeches while touring the Middle East, he said boldly, "You can continue to drug the masses with provocative slogans and unfulfilled promises, but at the rate things have been going for the last seventeen years, the Arabs have not made an inch of a thai"<sup>72</sup>.

During the two last decades, the Maghreb has become more active and more aggressive in leading the politics of the Arab world. Indeed, meetings, conferences, and summits were held in the Maghreban countries. The role played by Algerian diplomacy in the issue of the American hostage in 1982 was well appreciated. Tunis, became during one decade the home of

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<sup>71</sup>Callagher, Charles F., . The Maghreb and the Middle East, p.4.

<sup>72</sup>Steel, Ronald, North Africa, (New York, Viking Press, 1964), vol 38 number 5, p.106.

the Arab League, and the PLO headquarter. The creation of the Palestinian state was announced in Algiers on November 15, 1988. The Fee, summit of the Arab leaders, in 1982, witnessed the first Arab agreement over the settlement of the Palestinian issue.

Two thirds of the Arab world lies in the region of the Maghreb. In the year 2000 the population of North Africa will reach 90 millions, almost 50% of the entire Arab population. Given these facts, one can imagine how dynamic a force would be created in the Arab world if the Mashrek and the Maghreb work out a positive cooperation.

However this common background shared with the Mashrek does not extend to economic cooperation. Trade between the two regions is too low. The Gulf countries are known for their large labor market yet they employ less than 300,000 !<sup>73</sup>.

The contribution of the Gulf states in the economic development program of the Maghreb region is insignificant. The few investments go to the tourism sector and safe investments.

### **3. The Arab World and the United States**

The United States has been on the periphery of North African history at most times. Not until the early days of

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<sup>73</sup>Feds, Marc, Le Maghreb dans la Politique Internationale, Revue de la defence nationale, Paris, 1990.

independence was there any meaningful contact between the two countries.

The very first contacts between the US and North Africa date back to the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The relationship between the United States and the region may be divided into four periods<sup>74</sup>. The first, from American independence until 1815, was secured by the treaties between the US and the "Barbary" states<sup>75</sup>. During the second period, from 1815 to 1942, contact was slight. America was more concerned with Europe and Europe's interest in North Africa than with the area itself.

The third period, from 1942 until 1956, saw America involved in the Maghreb as a result of its new role in world affairs. The fourth period started with the departure of the French from the region.

During the past four decades, US policy regarding the North African countries favored Morocco and Tunisia, who were considered close companions who shared the same values and ideals. In the case of Algeria things were more complicated. Algeria, contrary to its neighbors, grew up in a harsh age of blocs, black-mail, and the inchoate search of the third for

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<sup>74</sup>Galagher, Charles F, The United States and North Africa, (Harvard University Press, 1963), p.232.

<sup>75</sup>The United States undertook negotiations with the Empire of Morocco, with the Regencies of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, for guaranteeing the security of their Mediterranean maritime interests.

means of self expression.

The US was very cautious during the Algerian struggle for independence, and did not want to take a position against French policy in the region. The beginning of the Algero-American misunderstanding was generated in 1962, with the provocative support given by the Algerian government to Cuba during the missile crisis<sup>76</sup>. More recently, its neutrality has been well appreciated by the US administration<sup>77</sup>.

Since the 1960s, the US approach to the Maghreb region has been on a country-by-country basis. The US continued to have a very good relationship with Tunisia and Morocco. The relationship was cemented by the signing of various agreements for cooperation in many areas, from financial, to cultural, to military activities.

#### **4. Greater Africa**

The relationship of the North Africa countries to sub-Saharan Africa goes back to the first stages of its history. The propagation of Islam over the sahara gave birth to large states such as the Kingdom of Mali (XI-XVI Century)

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<sup>76</sup>President Ben Bella, having been received with exceptional honors as head of state during his visit to Washington after attending a session of the United Nations, proceeded directly to Havana where he praised the Cuban revolution in the warmest terms.

<sup>77</sup>The role played by Algeria in the case of the American hostages, US Embassy Tehran 1982.

and the state of Songhai (VIII-XVI Century). In modern history, the North African countries and the subsaharan region have shared the same destiny of European colonialism, along with the struggle for independence.

The Maghreb's geostrategic position allows it to play an important role in the economic development of the entire continent. The Treaty of Marakech made clear in its preamble and Article(17)<sup>78</sup>that the Maghreb region remains a component of the African Continent. This constitutes the willingness of the founders of the AMU to promote cooperation with the rest of the continent<sup>79</sup>.

However, the Maghreb Union has not developed a common policy toward the continent. Each country has its own bilateral relationship based upon its individual interest<sup>80</sup>. Analyzed individually, these relationships show that individual interest has always been motivator and monitor. Algeria's relationship with the subsaharan region dates back to the days of liberation. During its struggle for independence, the Liberation Front (FLN) progressively

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<sup>78</sup>The founding Treaty of the Arab Maghreb Union, stipulates in its article 17 "Other countries belonging to the Arab National or African community may become part of this Treaty if the members countries give their agreement".

<sup>79</sup>The Treaty of union was signed in February 17,1989, Marakech Morocco.

<sup>80</sup>Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord (AAN) 1978, tome XVII.



sensibilized the different Pan-Africa instances<sup>81</sup>.

Although Tunisia does not have common boundaries with subsaharan Africa, it remains very active in the continent, and has always been an aggressive opponent of colonialism. Tunisia is an active member of the OAU, and was among the first countries to denounce colonialism, as well as the policy of apartheid and segregation as practiced by the South African government<sup>82</sup>.

Morocco's relationship with subsaharan Africa goes back many centuries, and is based on religious and cultural links that have been developed. This relationship was altered on two occasions. The first was when the Organization of African Unity denied Moroccan claims on the newly independent state of Mauritania. The second was during the OAU summit in 1980, when 26 out of the 56 organization members backed the admission of the Sahraoui Arab Democrat Republic (SADR)<sup>83</sup>.

On the whole, bilateral relations between the Maghreb and the rest of the African countries are diverse and cover many issues. These relations have always been stronger or weaker depending on the individual objective and self-interest of each country. In this context, the strategies used by

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<sup>81</sup>Especially the Organization of the African Unity (OAU).

<sup>82</sup>Toumi, Ali, La Politique Africaine de la Tunisie, AAN 1978, OP.CIT.

<sup>83</sup>Price, David Lynn, Conflict in the Maghreb: the Western Sahara, (London, Institute for the study of conflict Press, 1981), p.17.

those countries are not the same, and to some extent they could conflict<sup>84</sup>.

Today, the trend is toward overcoming these conflicts and to adopt a common positive policy toward the subsaharan continent. The Maghreb, as a sub-region of the Organization of African unity (OAU), should work to promote the social, economic, political, and cultural cooperation within the continent, in order to build the path toward a real African unity, far from the conflictual and ideological quarrels. Indeed it is very useful to emphasize the importance of the role played, or which could be played, by the Maghreb countries in achieving the economic integration of all the continent<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>84</sup>Different between Morocco and Algeria over the Western Sahara illustrated this situation.

<sup>85</sup>Diouf, Moktar, L'Integration Economique : Perspectives Africaines, (Paris, editions Africaines, 1984), p.52.

#### IV. THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR THE AREA

##### A. THE MAGHREB UNION

###### 1. History

The first time that North Africa was united was under the Arab dynasty of Almoahades<sup>86</sup>, which gained control over the region from the second half of the twelfth century to the end of the thirteenth century<sup>87</sup>.

The Maghreb countries' search for integration represents a continuation of previous attempts. These attempts were under abnormal conditions, either under French colonial rule or in the transition period of the 1960s.

Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia have long sought unity, but rival national interests thwarted this goal until 1964. In the 1920s, a group of North African students in Paris formed the Maghreb Association. France, of course, did not then encourage any form of cooperation among Algeria, its colony, and Morocco and Tunisia, its protectorates.

The attempt to stimulate North African unity was

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<sup>86</sup>After crushing the Bani Hilal in the battle of Setif in 1153, the Almoahad, led by Abdelmumin Ibn Ali, embarked on the expedition that was the conquest of the actual Maghreb region, and for the first time unified under a single authority.

<sup>87</sup>Robana, Abderrahmen, The Prospects for Economic Community in North Africa, (London, Praeger Publisher Inc, 1973), p.12.

further enhanced by preliminary discussions that took place in a Maghreb bureau established in Cairo. The Maghreb bureau was sustained and subsidized by the Arab League. Since the meetings took place before the countries were independent, the North African states were represented by various movements<sup>88</sup>.

When both Morocco and Tunisia gained independence in 1956, their political and moral support for Algeria's struggle against France stimulated their leader's efforts in planning for unity. Throughout the Algerian war for independence, both Morocco and Tunisia sheltered Algerian refugees and supplied arms to the National Liberation Front (FLN).

One year before Algerian independence in 1962, King Mohammed V of Morocco and President Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia called for a Maghreb union that had the full support of the FLN. However, a change in leadership in Morocco<sup>89</sup>, the excitement of a hard struggle and newly won independence in Algeria, and the search to build the foundation of a modern nation in Tunisia, cooled the spirit of solidarity that had characterized the leaders' actions under colonial rule.

In 1964, the three Maghreb states began to realize that the post-independence task of building a viable national

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<sup>88</sup>Initially Morocco was represented by Allala A l Fassi, leader of one of the opposition parties, the Istiklal Party. Algeria was represented by Mohammed Ben Kedher, and Tunisia by Dr Habib Thamir and Habib Bourguiba.

<sup>89</sup>Hassen II succeeded to his father King Mohammed V who died February 26, 1961.

economy was constrained by narrow national markets, low domestic savings, competing exports, and inadequate skills and resources. This awareness was illustrated in September 1964, by the willingness of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco to sign a multinational agreement committing them to cooperate and harmonize their economic activities<sup>90</sup>.

The four countries<sup>91</sup> agreed to create a coherent system of joint institutions: le Comite Permanent Consultatif du Maghreb (CPCM). The objective behind the establishment of these institutions was to seek the ways and means to an economic integration of the region. Potential gains from economic integration in this region seemed obvious and significant.

On October 11, 1965, the four countries (Algeria, Morocco, Libya, and Tunisia), signed the protocol instituting the Comite Peramanent Consultatif du Maghreb(CPCM). Under this protocol, the four countries agreed to grant one another trade preferences, to work out a customs union policy, to develop a joint program for their exports, and to "coordinate and harmonize industrialization policy in their four

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<sup>90</sup>See Economic Commission for Africa, Report of the industrial coordination mission to Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia, (E/C, 14/2489 Addis Abeba, 1964).

<sup>91</sup>The Protocol was signed by Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia.

countries"<sup>92</sup>. The CPCM and its technical commissions were the basis of economic integration. Their activity was essentially the preparation of feasibility studies in the following areas:

- The existing industrial capacity of the Maghreb
- Demand for industrial products in the Maghreb
- The production and demand for food products and agricultural crops that serve as raw materials for industry.
- The marketing of citrus, fruits, wine, olive oil.
- The harmonization of statistical nomenclature and industrial standardization.

Accordingly, the CPCP, aided by the Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1967, drew up an overall plan embodying different alternatives and laying down a scale of priorities, as well as stringent procedures for cognitive moves towards full integration.

The plan provided for three categories of action: a maximum program provided a full timetable for economic union after a transitional period; a minimum program envisaged consultations on the setting of new industries and semi-permanent processes of negotiation; and an intermediate program involved the partial liberalization of internal trade and joint consultation and negotiation of the terms of association between the Maghreb and the European Community.

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<sup>92</sup>Protocol of agreement, Status of the CPCM, October 11, 1964, Tunis.

These objectives were thought to be concrete and not unreasonably ambitious.

However, the obstacles were many and the changes necessary to bring about integration involved complex technical, economic, and political issues. In light of the similarity in production patterns, as well as structural rigidities, there remain strong vested interests constraining the formation of a concrete economic union<sup>93</sup>.

The lack of a common political will was the main cause of the failure of the CPCM. The North African governments were facing a choice between two logical contradictions, edification of the nation-state or the integration of the region. They finally decided on the former. The CPCM recommendations were never implemented, and the Western Sahara crisis in the fall 1975 put an end to this ambitious program<sup>94</sup>.

These difficulties did not discourage the North Africa countries from their commitment to a viable Maghreban integration. These efforts were illustrated by the signing of the treaty instituting the Maghreb Arab Union on February 17,

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<sup>93</sup>Robana, Abderrahmen, The Prospect for an economic community in north Africa, (London, Praeger Publishers Inc 1973), p.73.

<sup>94</sup>The Western Sahara crisis started in the fall of 1975. This territorial dispute envihimated the inter-maghreban relations for more than one decade.

1989 in Marrakech (Morocco)<sup>95</sup>. This treaty constitutes a big step in the process of developing Maghreb unity. The objectives of this union, as defined by the Treaty of Marrakech, are<sup>96</sup>:

- Consolidation of the fraternal links within the region.
- Promotion of progress and welfare for the society and the safe guarding of its rights.
- Contribution in maintaining peace, which is based on justice and equity.
- Setting and pursuing of common policies in different sectors and fields.
- Progressive achievement of the free circulation of persons and goods, and the free transfer and movement of capital within the region's countries.

## **2. Structure of the Maghreb**

The Treaty of Marrakech establishes a number of pan-Maghrebi institutions. The Presidential Council is the highest body of the union, and is composed of the five heads of state. It makes its decisions unanimously, and it constitutes the only body endowed with decision-making prerogatives, meeting every six months.

The union treaty also establishes a council of foreign ministers, which is responsible for preparing for the semi-annual meetings of the Presidential Council. A

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<sup>95</sup>Balta, Paul, Le Grand Maghreb: des l'Indépendance à l'An 2000, (Paris, La Découverte, 1990), p.127. ,

<sup>96</sup>Article two of the Treaty.



Consultative Assembly (composed of 100 members, twenty from each country), meets once a year to examine projects proposed by the Presidential Council, and submits its recommendations to the heads of state<sup>97</sup>. A judiciary body is also established by the treaty. It is composed of ten magistrates (two appointed by each country for a term of six years) whose role is to "examine and statute on any disputes over the interpretation and implementation of the treaty and over the agreements signed within the framework of the union." Its decisions are enforceable and definitive. Another important body of the union is the General Secretariat, which sits every six months in one of the five countries. Finally, specialized ministerial committees are established by the Treaty (human resources, economy and finance, infrastructure and alimentation security).

The Maghreb Arab union " en chiffres" :

Five members: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia.

Area : 6 millions km<sup>2</sup>

Population : 65 millions

PIB(Milliards \$) :109,500

PNB/ Head : 2032,00 \$

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<sup>97</sup>AMU Treaty.

Table # 1: The Maghreb "en chiffre"

Countries	Area Km2 thousand	Population	PNB \$ Billions	Commercial Balance
Algeria	2,381	25,000	63,6	+1,6
Libya	1,760	5,000	22,3	+1,6
Mauritania	1,030	2,000	0,8	-
Morocco	710	25,000	14,2	-1,1
Tunisia	164	8,000	9	-0,9

#### B. EXTERNAL CONSIDERATIONS

Since the Gulf war, a new concept was born in dealing with international and foreign affairs. This concept is called the New World Order. However, this concept is not really a new one. Earlier, during the 1970s, another term was used in the international and UN forums, it was the New International Economic Order.

The two concepts could not have the same meaning. Whatever the meaning, one thing is certain. The world is now moving toward a new system, where only the best, most competitive and most productive will survive.

In a word, we can say that the survival of the Maghreb countries will depend on their ability and their capacity to compete in this new international economic order. Their

success will depend on the degree of achievement of their cooperation and solidarity to the external environment.

### **1. The World Economy During the 1990s**

The world economy is actually characterized by two trends which progress in paradoxal directions. The market globalization on one side, and the constitution of regional economic blocks on other side.

#### **a. The Globalization of the Market**

This phenomena is not really new. It started back before World War II. The increase of the world exchange and the interdependence of the different national economies led to the creation of a global market. Indeed the proliferation of the commercial and financial transactions across the World, eliminate the old notion of national boundaries. With a credit card, Visa card for example, one could travel around the world and make all transactions needed without a problem. In the same way, the increase in the number of the multinational firms shows the globalization of the market.

These trends are facilitated by the development of communication and transportation technology, and reach all other sectors of the economy, such as research industry, and medicine. To illustrate the phenomena of the globalization of the market, some numbers are useful: 17 American and Japanese firms possess 63% of the world semi-conductors industry. In 1990 the US and Japan reached 90% of the world production

of the automotive industry<sup>100</sup>.

**b. The Constitution of Regional Economic Blocks**

Everywhere in the world we are witnessing the birth of multiple regional blocks and economic associations. The Europe of 1993, the North American Free Trade (NAFTA), the association of South Asia Nations (ASEAN), and many others are good examples of the development of these trends of commercial blocks.

This move toward the constitution of a regional economic and commercial block is motivated by the notion of comparative advantage. In search for more competitiveness, more productivity, and by using the economic scale, many countries seem to be very attracted to regional Blocks. New economic and commercial alliances strength and extend all over the world in Europe, America and Asia.

• The North American Free Market (NAFTA)

The United States, Canada, and Mexico formed the most important zone of free exchange in the world, thus creating a potential market of 360 millions consumers. This agreement will allow those three countries to be more competitive by using the comparative advantage of each of them.

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<sup>100</sup>Journal le Monde, dossiers et documents numero 199, Mai 1992, le dernier etat du monde.

Although it is said that the US firms are the greatest beneficiaries of this treaty, the other members, especially Mexico, will take advantage of US and Canadian industries attracted by the low cost of the Mexican labor.

- The European Economic Space (EES)

Starting January 1, 1993, nineteen European countries will be grouped within the new European Economic Space<sup>101</sup>. This association will constitute the biggest integrated market in the world. It will include more than 380 millions peoples. Through the Common Market and the European Association of Free Exchange (AELE)<sup>102</sup>, the European countries seek to counter the North American market and the Japanese coalition in South East Asia.

The elimination of the physical boundaries will allow the European firms to locate their plants in the most advantageous locations within the continent. The elimination of the boundaries will eliminate the customs control, which will have the immediate effect to decrease the cost and delays, allowing the European goods to be more competitive.

- The Association of the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

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<sup>101</sup>The European Economic Space (EES) is formed by 12 members of the European Community or common market, and 7 countries of the European Association of free exchange.

<sup>102</sup>The European Association of free exchange counts 7 countries :Austria, Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, Denmark, Holland, Norway.

The Association of the South East Asia Nations (ASEAN)

Japan, the five dragons, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, formed the ASEAN aimed by the same search of productivity and world competitiveness.

Those countries have already shown spectacular performances. Japan performs 15.5% of the total production. With the lead of Japan, this part of the world seems to be in a good position to counterbalance or challenge any other economic or commercial block in the world. Indeed, as shown below, the growth rate realized by these countries is by far the highest in the world.

We can also add the example of other South Latin American countries, which understood the necessity of the creation of a common block in order to maximize their comparative advantage and consequently to gain more weight in bargaining with their world trading counterparts.

## **2. The North African Countries In this New World Order**

It will be very useful to give some numbers in order to situate the Maghreb region in the global scheme. The move of the international society toward a more interdependent system will stimulate the North African countries to work out an economic cooperation and regional integration in order to get a better position within the international community.

Table # 2: The different regional groups

Countries	Organ	Areas Km2	Pop/th	Pop den
Europe-12	EC	2,398,682	335,400	139,0
N. America	NAFTA	12,040,370	364,000	3,3
S. Asia	ASEAN	3,062,316	320,000	0,14
Australia	-	7,686,848	16,000	2,0
Brasilia		8,511,965	135,000	15,8
Maghreb	AMU	5,783,896	62,000	10
China	-	9,596,961	1,050,000	107,8

**a. Face to the European Block**

The European countries remain the main partner of the North African countries. The constitution of the European Community did increase the dependency of these countries on the European common market. This situation is worsened by the fact that the three core countries of the AMU, Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia are dealing separately with the European block. No common policy or concertation before concluding agreements or bilateral accord with the EC. With the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the Eastern European countries are looking for membership status in the EC, which will deepen the marginalization of the North African countries.

**b. The Maghreb and the Mediterranean Space**

As mentioned earlier, the North African region is geographically and historically a full part of the

Mediterranean region. By its location, the Maghreb lies entirely in the southern part of the Mediterranean basin. This position makes it an important actor in the dialogue between the North and the South.

The Mediterranean basin itself constitutes a big opportunity for the economic development. Indeed this region totaled 14.7% of the world PIB, and received 15.5% of the world exportations<sup>103</sup>. It counts 395 millions people, which represents 7.4% of the world population.

The lion's share of the economic development in this region goes to the Northern part of the basin, France, Italy, and Spain. The Maghreb represents only between 7% and 4% of the PIB performed by those three countries<sup>104</sup>.

Contrary to Japan, who promoted the economic development in South East Asia and led this region to a better industrial situation, Europe did nothing to promote the economic and industrial conditions of the Maghreb region. Its policy of small scale aid and assistance is not the best way to allow the North African countries to turn away from underdevelopment.

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<sup>103</sup>Year 1989.

<sup>104</sup>Numbers related to the decade between 1979 and 1989.



## V. PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESS

### A. ACHIEVEMENT

Since the marrakech Summit in February 17, 1989, the Presidential council met several times:

- January 1990 (Tunis, Tunisia)
- July 1990 (Algier, Algeria)
- march 1990 (Tripoli, Libya)
- September 1991 (Casablanca, Morocco)
- November 1992 (Nouakchot, Mauritania)

The other different committees set up by the protocol continue to meet regularly. Many agreements and decisions were adopted during these sessions. For example, the review of the relation between the Maghreb and the European Community (EC), the creation of the Maghreb university, the Agricultural institute. Many other decisions were adopted, which were related to transportation, investment, communication, creation of the free zone, customs union, and the common market.

Thus, the Maghreb train seems well started, slowly, but surely. The participating states seem very committed to this process of the region's integration. Already as we saw previously, the Agenda set up in order to achieve this

integration is very positive and expresses the willingness of the members to work towards this direction and achieve the region's integration<sup>105</sup>. Already, we note the adoption, in November 1990, of a common ID card, the free circulation of persons, while waiting for the adoption of a common passport. The positive effect of these decisions can be noted on the people of the region, thus, giving birth to the flourishing of new associations (physicians, engineers, attorneys, press reporters, editors , writers...).

Internal and external conditions constrained the Maghreban leaders to focus more on the achievement of the region's integration. This aspiration is the only way for these countries to get out of economic, political and social crisis, and face new challenges, especially their relationship with the European Community.

Since the foundation of the AMU, trade between the Maghreb countries increased by an average of 34.1% per year<sup>106</sup>. This move is very important, knowing that the inter-Maghreban trade represents only a small percentage of their external exchange. Indeed, the North African countries inter-trade represents 2.68% of the total amount of their foreign exchange. This figure is even more dramatic compared to the trade with the European Community. It represents only 0.72%. The signatures

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<sup>105</sup>Rulleau, Claudine, Les Relations Inter-Maghrebine.

<sup>106</sup>Institut d'economie quantitative (Tunis).

of the Marrakech treaty have already set up through the AMU the executive and administrative machinery, they are now progressively moving toward the economic integration of the region. A pipe line is being built to carry Algerian natural gas to Morocco (and ultimately to Spain).

The AMU treaty represents a positive and ambitious program. Despite the fact that many argue that little has been done on the path of the region's integration, it is clear that all the members are aware of the new economic challenges and the necessity for all of them to fully subscribe to this effort.

Much has to be done in order to meet the agenda set up by the treaty. Indeed, despite the fact that the region's economic integration has begun to acquire institutional form, and has realized some achievements by moving from negotiation to draft treaty and council status, the AMU still lacks an effective institutional framework and the progress of the implementation of the treaty is rather slow. The most positive steps toward building a more integrated regional economy have been the result of bilateral initiatives rather than the Maghreb organization joint action.

#### **B. PROSPECTS**

The new world order, the emergence of big trading blocks, and the increasing trends of protectionism, it makes sense for the North African countries-small and middle sized states to

club together to promote their industry and commerce, and to espouse a common economic policy toward their main trading partner, the European Community, on which the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) is a loosely based.

We saw through this paper, that all the North African countries have the same motives, urgency, ideology, and complementarity in seeking the economic integration of the region.

We saw also in the previous chapters that these countries have similar backgrounds. They share religion, history, geographic conditions, and cultural richness. The desire of the Maghreb leaders to increase and strengthen economic cooperation within the region was not new. It dates back to the pre-independence years.

We argued that the revival of this idea again was motivated by many factors, especially the national interest of each member, and especially as a response to the enlargement of the European Community to involve new Southern European partners (Spain, Portugal, and Greece).

One can ask what alternatives are left for the North African countries, and what will be the best approach to this difficult relationship with the European Community? How should the Maghreb region behave in this new world order? And what will be the prospects of success of any approach?

The lessons learned from history show that nations can only count on themselves. All foreign assistance is self-

interested and generated for the single purpose to serve its donor. The Maghreb countries should primarily rely on themselves, on their willingness and hard work to reach the level of viable economic development.

In my view, this approach should be examined from two directions, within and outside the region.

**1. Within the Maghreb region**

One cannot ignore the importance of the institutional framework achieved by the AMU Treaty. Although it constitutes a big achievement, much has to be done, especially in redefining goals and expectations. Indeed, economic integration is an excellent objective, and it can be done in a short period of time. This is why it would probably be more realistic and tangible to seek more intensified cooperation rather than integration. Intensified cooperation, for several reasons, fits more into the actual Maghreban condition.

First, the goals and objectives of cooperation are less far-reaching and more specific than those of integration.

Second, the result of cooperation is more tangible, and its success is perceivable over a short period of time. This creates less political frustration.

Third, cooperation projects are less costly than those of integration in case members withdraw from the union. A clear definition of the agenda should emphasize the concept

of cooperation within the member-states. Cooperation should be initiated at all levels, but especially at the economic level, by "the sharing of burden and benefit in projects of supranational importance"<sup>105</sup>. Cooperation should be viewed as a tool for solving concrete economic problems in the short run and not as an ultimate political aim.

Cooperation at the cultural and social levels is strengthened through the promotion of interactions between the people of the different countries. These interactions could be sporting competitions, music and various forms of entertainment. The initiation of a large program of family and student exchange within the members of the Maghreb will have a positive effect in cementing links between the youths of the region. The media is also an effective tool to serve this noble goal. Indeed the broadcasting of common radio and tv programs could cultivate within the people of the Maghreb a feeling of unity and common destiny.

This cooperation could be extended to higher levels, where the five countries begin to act and react to the international events in the same way, not only during the tough moments<sup>106</sup>, but also during the good moments as well.

In this case cooperation can contribute to a favorable

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<sup>105</sup>Gosh, Pradip K, edit Economic Integration and Third world Development, (New York, Basic Books, 1975), p.105.

<sup>106</sup>The 1979s witnessed a full cooperation among the North African countries during the fight against the sauterelles invasion from the sahara.

environment, preconditioning a later successful integration of all the region. In reviewing the political and economic agenda fixed by the AMU Treaty in February 17, 1989 we realized that after almost five years, the institutional building has not reached its final phase. Events within and outside the region have contributed to the resistance of some members to show more support to the organization.

This is why it would be cautious to focus more on intensified cooperation until the favorable conditions for the institutional building of the AMU exist, and political sensitivities are replaced by economic pragmatism.

The North African countries should look to more economic complementarity of the region. This complementarity will increase the comparative advantage of the member-states of the union, and consequently allow them to be more productive and more competitive in the world market. This economic complementarity will permit the Arab Maghreb Union members to devote all their energy to the sectors where they possess a comparative advantage and produce goods at a low cost and better quality, which will increase the economic efficiency, the basis of any program of economic success.

The following chart shows how this complementarity could be worked out:

Table # 3: Interaction and comparative advantage

	Comparative Advantage	Deficit	Interaction's Outcomes
Algeria	hydro/petr heavy ind labor	foodstuff light ind	Less dependency  on external market.
Morocco	agricul prod phosph labor/tourism	gas hydr capital	
Tunisia	phosph olive/oil light ind labor/tourism	iron gas capital	More bargaining power
Libya	hydro,petro capital	foodstuff labor light ind	Economic growth &
Mauritania	iron cooper fish	hydro/petro skilled labor	political stability



## **2. The Maghreb and the External Environment**

We saw through this paper that the Maghreb interacts with many regional partners. Some of these partners are more organized and show more efficiency and pragmatism in their policy (the EC); others are less organized and lack efficiency and rationality in their interaction (Sub-saharan region).

The Maghreb organization should adopt a common and rational policy towards its external partners. Indeed, it will be in the interest of all the region if the member-states avoid bilateral arrangements and replace them with a global agreement valid for the entire region. This means that the members of the AMU should cooperate and be in concert before dealing with external partners. It would make no sense if the Moroccan and Tunisian citrus industries compete to get into the European market, or the Tunisian and Algerian textile manufacturers to compete to penetrate the foreign market. The immediate result will be a drop in the price of these commodities, and consequently a negative effect on the economy of the concerned countries, and the region as a whole.

Some North African countries are desperately seeking the status of membership in the European Community<sup>107</sup>.

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<sup>107</sup>Morocco persisted in trying for many years to acquire the membership in the EC. This demand increased since the admission of Spain and Portugal into the common market.

Although, this is legitimate demand, a minimum degree of realism shows that this will never happen. The European Community will never accept or welcome an African, Arabo-Muslim state in their club<sup>108</sup>.

For many years Turkey has lobbied for Community membership but has never gotten it probably for similar reasons.

This is one more reason why the North African countries should count more on themselves, and should not expect a miracle coming from outside to relieve them from their economic difficulties.

And, if the AMU has a single "raison d'être", it is to reduce the Maghreb dependency on Europe by developing internal trade. The European small-scale economic aid-currently 165 millions ecus(\$200 million)- is likely to fall on stony ground. The poorer members of the EC, already afraid that scarce cash will be diverted to Eastern Europe, oppose any increase in aid for North Africa.

The European Community is becoming so obsessed with its own integration(and with Eastern Europe) that it fails to help and teeming the Maghreb.

The solution of the economic development of the North African countries is within the region and the AMU

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Morocco considers itself as a natural prolongment of the European continent.

<sup>108</sup>The Economist, May 19, 1990, p.48.

member-states themselves. External aid cannot be expected to relieve the region itself.

Through this paper we saw that despite the vicissitudes of the political scene in the region, there has been a significant boost in commercial and economic cooperation since the creation of the AMU in energy and industrial programs.

The new policy of the Maghreban countries for more liberalization of their economies is also a positive indicator of the maturity of the AMU member-states and their economic pragmatism. Indeed, all the North African countries are embarked on the privatization and improvement of the performances of the state sector enterprises. They have signaled their commitment to reform their economies, and to make more structural adjustments in their public sectors.

The Maghreb countries are members of the international community. As a result these countries are not only concerned about their stature in the region, but they are also concerned about their position in the global system. When functioning alone, Morocco, Tunisia, or Algeria are relatively minor actors in the regional and international arena.

The dream expressed by the signing of the AMU Treaty is a good beginning, but more should be done. The desire of the Maghreb countries to enhance their power, and their ability to shape the international system in their favor, depends more much on the degree of cooperation and commitment

for common and cohesive objectives. Thus, cooperative efforts reflect not only the desire to enhance their domestic economies and regional influence, but also reflect these countries' ambition to become international players, independent of lingering colonial ties.

Given the fact that each of these countries lacks resources, on an individual basis there is little they can do in this respect. As a cohesive unit, however, they become a viable force. And there is no doubt that this integration or cooperation would increase the leverage of the five countries when negotiating with the European Community for trade agreement and aid packages. Many countries have already understood the necessity of cooperation. Unity could be attained at the cultural level through common policies of detente and reform and, to some extent, through economic measures.

The people of the region are becoming more aware of how integration could be attained without a wholesale transformation of the formalities of states, borders and social systems.

A favorite slogan among all the German Parties is "We should not change borders, but change what border means"<sup>110</sup>.

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<sup>110</sup>Ole, Waever, Three Competing Europe, p.482.

## **VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AID THE MAGHREB CASE: IS THERE ANY RECIPE?**

The development of nations takes years. It cannot be done without the full commitment of the main actors, the leaders and their constituencies. The deficiency of one of them makes any attempt fruitless.

So far, through this paper, I have written on the necessity for the Maghreb states to pursue their efforts toward union because of the historical background and the different challenges they face. Until now a great deal of enthusiasm and goodwill have been noted. The signing of the AMU Protocol, and the agenda set up by this Treaty are very encouraging.

However, much still remains to be done. The question is why it takes so long for the North African countries to achieve their union, while other regions here met this challenge despite their different backgrounds.

To answer to this question, it is useful to review the literature and the theoretical framework related to this issue of integration, and try to find out which model would best fit the case of the Maghreb region.

Before reviewing the different models of integration, the general definition of integration is worth defining. International political integration is described as, " a

process whereby a group of people, organized at the outset in two or more independent states, comes to constitute a political whole which can in some sense be described as a community"<sup>111</sup>.

At first glance regards unionism or consociationalism is typical of the politics of smaller states. Practically all scholars point to external threats as a major reason political elites draw together and purposefully resolve their differences for the sake of larger mutual interests.

The principal factors which help to achieve integration are common cultural, social, religious, geographical, features and shared concepts of internal and external threats. Indeed, the real borders are cultural, linguistic, and religious. People who share the same religion are more likely to be united. Often the physical barriers are artificial boundaries drawn during the era of colonialism.

However, the case of the United Arab Republic (UAR), the merger between Egypt and Syria<sup>112</sup> is a counter-example to our previous assumption. Indeed, even the mutual shared linguistic and religious backgrounds of the two countries proved not to be enough to save this union from collapse. Geographic and

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<sup>111</sup>Hoffman, S, contemporary Theory in International relations, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1960), p.7.

<sup>112</sup>The United Arab Republic (UAR) was born of the first merger of two sovereign states, Egypt and Syria. It took merely three years for the UAR to collapse and great hopes along with it.

ideological conditions were behind the failure of this attempt.

Egypt and Syria were geographically separate, which made any attempt at interaction difficult between the people of these two countries. Besides this, and despite their apparent agreement, the leadership of both countries had different patterns of ideological policy, the Bath in Syria, and the Nasserism in Egypt.

Another sad example of an unsuccessful union is the case of the merger of the two Yemeni states. Indeed, now a year after their merger the two parts of Yemen are plunged in a civil war of fratricide. The reason points certainly to the failure of elites on both sides who are unable to drop their differences to counteract the immobilizing and destabilizing effects of ideological fragmentation.

Ironically, the European countries with different linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds, succeeded in achieving the integration of the region. Strongly divided societies were stabilized by a conscious effort on the part of political elites in a permanent policy of counteracting the immobilizing and destabilizing effects of cultural fragmentation. The European Community seems to be the best example where economic and politic integration actually took place within the most fragmented society.

In the literature on international integration, it is possible to isolate two broad types of political, whole or

communal, relationships in which theorists expect the integrative process to culminate. These can be termed "the state-model" and the "community-model".

The state-model is more specific and more demanding than the community-model. Scholars emphasize the need to establish constitutional arrangement before any form of integration. The Federative system is one example of this form of state-model. The Federalist writers generally envisage some form of supranationality. A centralized state is the basis of any attempt of integration<sup>113</sup>.

In the community-model, on the other hand, more stress is placed on the character of the relationship between peoples. Both the elites and the general public have been involved in a process of integration.

The emergence of political institutions is considered less important than the growth of certain common values, perceptions and habits. Indeed the growth of this type of community can be compatible with the continuation of the nation-state system, and merely alters the way in which states deal with each other.

We can distinguish between two broad groups of theorists on integration according to the types of independent variables which they use to explain the process of change.

In the first of these, interest tends to focus directly on

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<sup>113</sup>Etizioni, A, Political Unification, (New York, Press, 1965), op.cit, p.4.



political variables-on problems concerning the power, responsiveness and control of political elites, and on the political habits of the general public. The states are seen as the main units on whose disposition the progress of integration depends. This category groups the Federalists and the Pluralist scholars.

The second group, by contrast, focuses on the economic, social and technological factors which, by much less direct processes are said to bring about political change. The Functionalists and Neofunctionalists share this image of an incremental process of political change based on the need to resolve social and economic problems.

These two types of classification can be represented schematically as follows:

Table # 4: Classification of the Integrative process

		STATE-MODEL	COMM-MODEL
<b>Integrative Process :</b>	<b>Direct:</b> Political Variables	Federalism	Pluralism
	<b>Indirect:</b> Socio-Econo Variables	Neo-Functionalism	Functionalism

On the one hand, the four approaches-pluralism, functionalism, neofunctionalism, federalism- are distinctive and internally cohesive in most important respects. On the other hand, they differ so dramatically from each other that we might well ask if the integration theory has any central core of problem, axioms, themes or hypotheses. The four approaches diverge seriously over: (a) the purposes and scope of integration; (b) the nature of the end-product; (c) fundamental assumptions about international politics and

social change; (d) the other disciplines and traditions of theory on which they draw ; (e) the major variables by which they explain the integrative process, and the levels of analysis on which they operate.

The following tabular summary gives an indication of the distinctiveness of each approach:

Table # 5: Summary of the Distinctiveness of the Different Integrative Approach.

	PLURALISM	FUNCTIONALISM	NEOFUNCTIONALISM	FEDERALISM
I. <i>The End-Product: Structure</i>	Community of states	Administrative network responsive to community needs	Supranational decision-making system	Supranational state
Evidence	Probability of peaceful conflict resolution; communications (flows intensity).	Degree of 'fit' between structures & functions: need - satisfaction.	Locus of decisions (scope & level).	Distribution of power (formal & informal).
II. <i>The Process: System</i>	Self-sustaining growth of interdependence & informal structures	Technical self-determination: imperatives of functional needs & technological change	Political development: growth of central institutions through 'forward linkage'	Constitutional revolution: dramatic redistribution of power and authority
State	Increase of capacity for decision-making, information & responsiveness	Reluctant cooperation to solve technical & economic problems	Bargaining process where governments pursue interests among other groups	Bargaining resulting in Hobbesian contract among elites of states
Individual	Social learning through communications & interaction (elite & mass)	Habits of cooperation derived from satisfaction of utilitarian needs by new institutions	Effects of successful decision-making & conflict resolution on elite attitudes	Differentiation of loyalties according to level of government.

In trying to apply those theoretical models of integration to the Maghreb case, we can say that the fourth cell, (Functionalism), is the best alternative. Indeed, given the actual internal conditions within the Maghreb countries, it will be more cautious to start the integrative process of the region through socio-economic variables first. In this model more stress is placed on the character of the relationship between peoples. The emergence of political institutions is considered less important than the growth of certain common values, perceptions and habits.

The community-model seems to fit best the case of the North African region. Indeed, despite the optimistic climate prevailing in the official level, many issues have to be settled before any attempt of political integration.

Not only are the institutions of the Maghreb countries structured differently, they are framed within an opposed ideology. The reasons are to be found in the colonial past of each country. Still, the member-states of the AMU are characterized by ideological and political antagonism.

Algerians had a long and bloody anti-French colonial past, and were more sensitive to their nation-building. They held the French responsible for trying to destroy their

identity<sup>114</sup>. Algeria adopted, then, an ideological hard line, and identified herself with the Eastern Bloc and Arab hardliners such as Syria, Libya, and Iraq.

For economic development, Algeria turned to the communists for equipment and assistance. The institutional single-party maintains all the commands of a centralized planned economy. All those factors combined to cast a shadow over Algeria's relations with her neighbors.

Given the fact that they were under a protectorate status during the French colonial rule, Morocco and Tunisia, kept alive their ancient traditional and social structures. They also achieved a smooth independence, which allowed them to maintain good relationship with the former colonizer.

Morocco had a constitutional monarchy and a multi-party system, Tunisia follows a presidential political system, and has recently legalized the opposition parties. As opposed to Algeria, and Libya, who were always looked upon suspiciously as seeking to export their socialist revolution, Tunisia, and Morocco advocated moderation and maintained close relations with the west, and the moderate Arab countries in the Middle-East.

Added to these political, and ideological difference, the political conditions within the region have been altered for

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<sup>114</sup>Algeria was considered a French territory, and Algerians were French citizens. Which explain the policy of the French colonial rule to destroy the Arabo-Muslim heritage of the Algerian society.

almost fourteen years by the dispute over the Western Sahara. Despite the positive steps toward the settlement of this issue, a lot remains to be done.

The settlement of this dispute should be done in the way that allows no loser, because the building of the integrative process should be worked on the basis of trust and confidence.

All these facts reinforce our assumption that the building of Maghreb unity should first begin on economic and social grounds. Europe ought to be a good example for the Maghrebi leaders.

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